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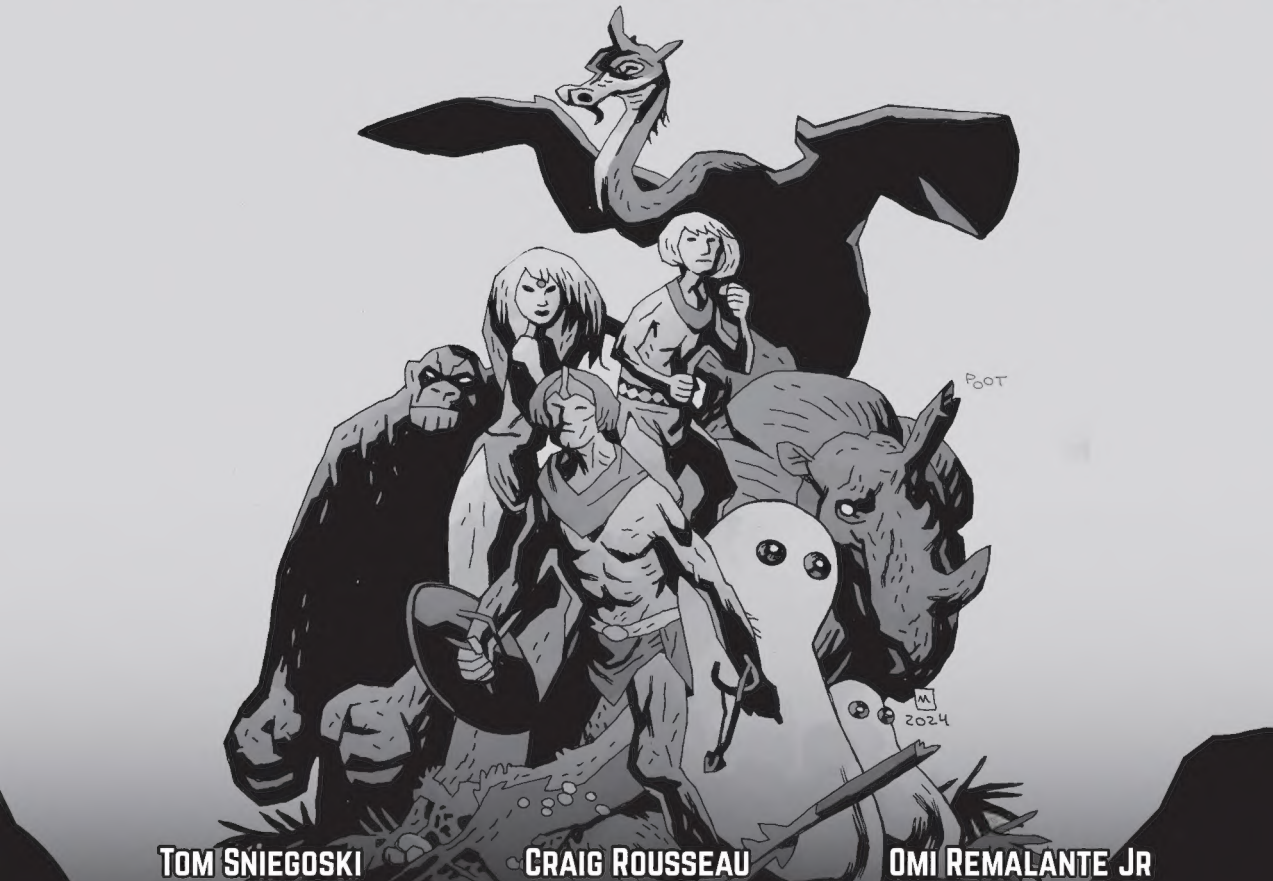
SOMEWHERE OUT IN SPACE LIVE THE HERCULOIDS: ZOK, THE LASER-RAY DRAGON, IGOO THE GIANT ROCK APE, TUNDRO THE TREMENDOUS, GLOOP AND GLEEP THE FORMLESS, FEARLESS WONDERS!

WITH ZANDOR THEIR LEADER, AND HIS WIFE TARA AND SON DORNO, THEY TEAM UP TO PROTECT THEIR PLANET FROM SINISTER INVADERS!

ALL STRONG, ALL BRAVE, ALL HEROES! THEY'RE...

THE HERCULOIDS



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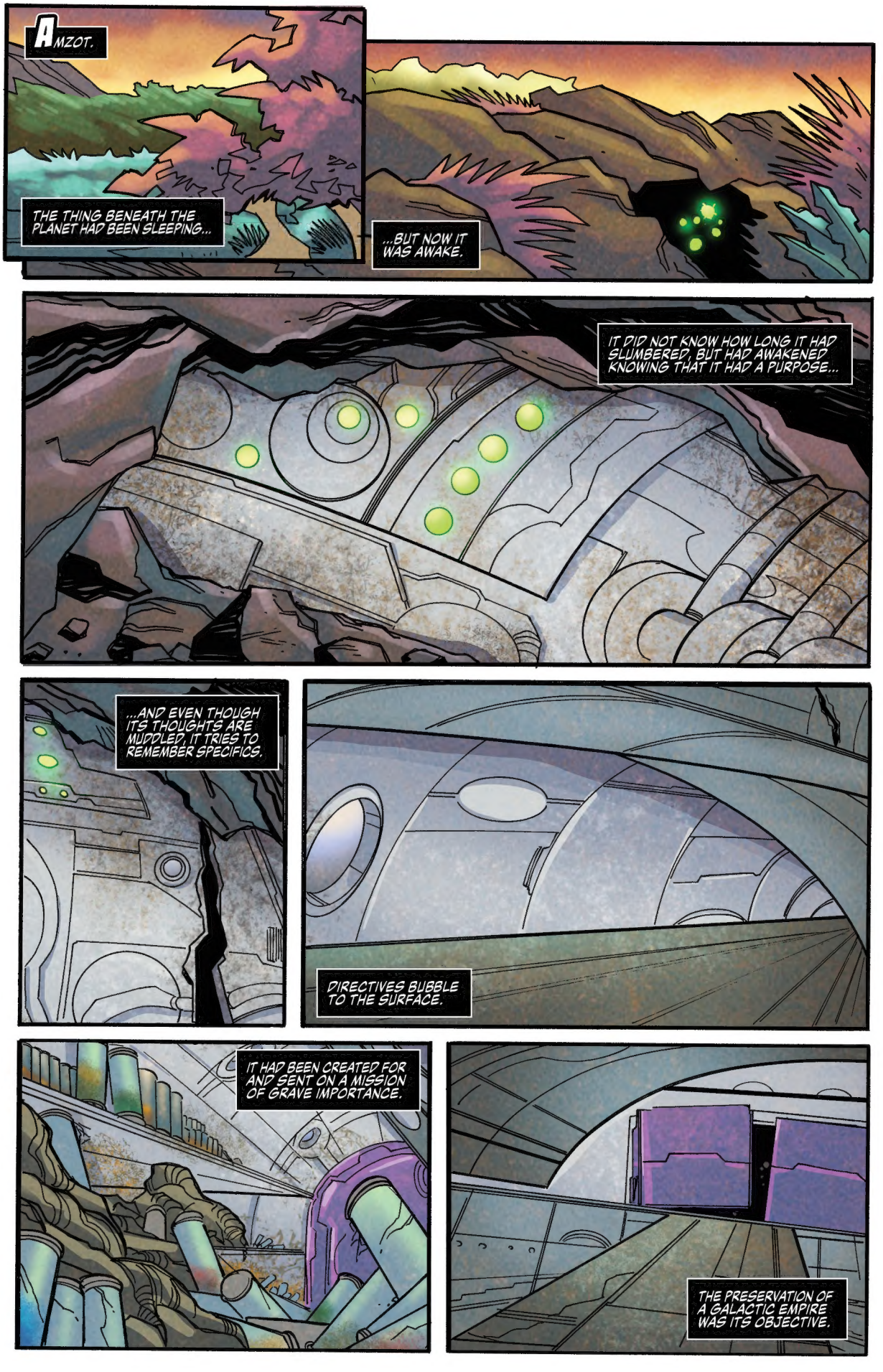
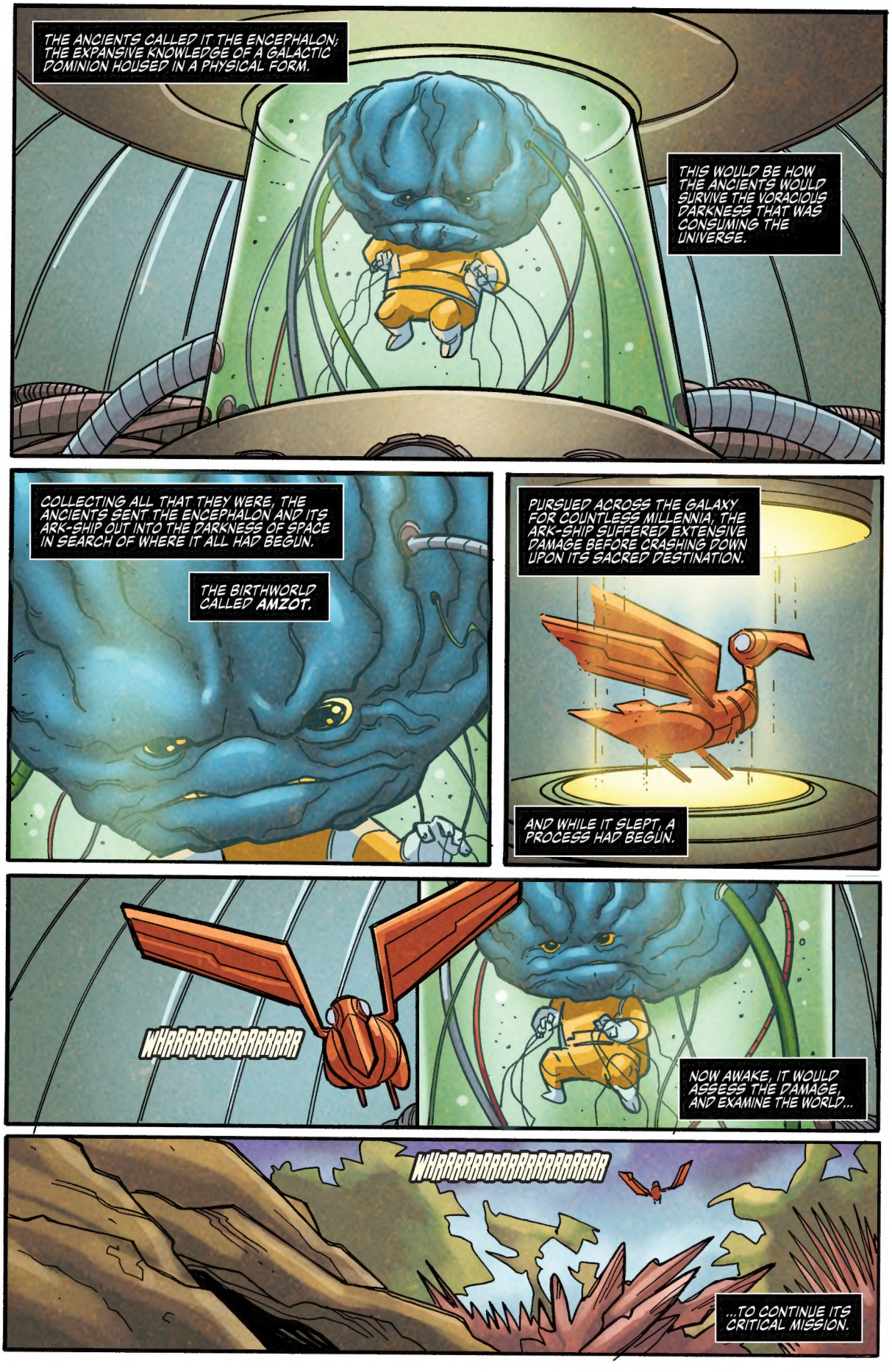
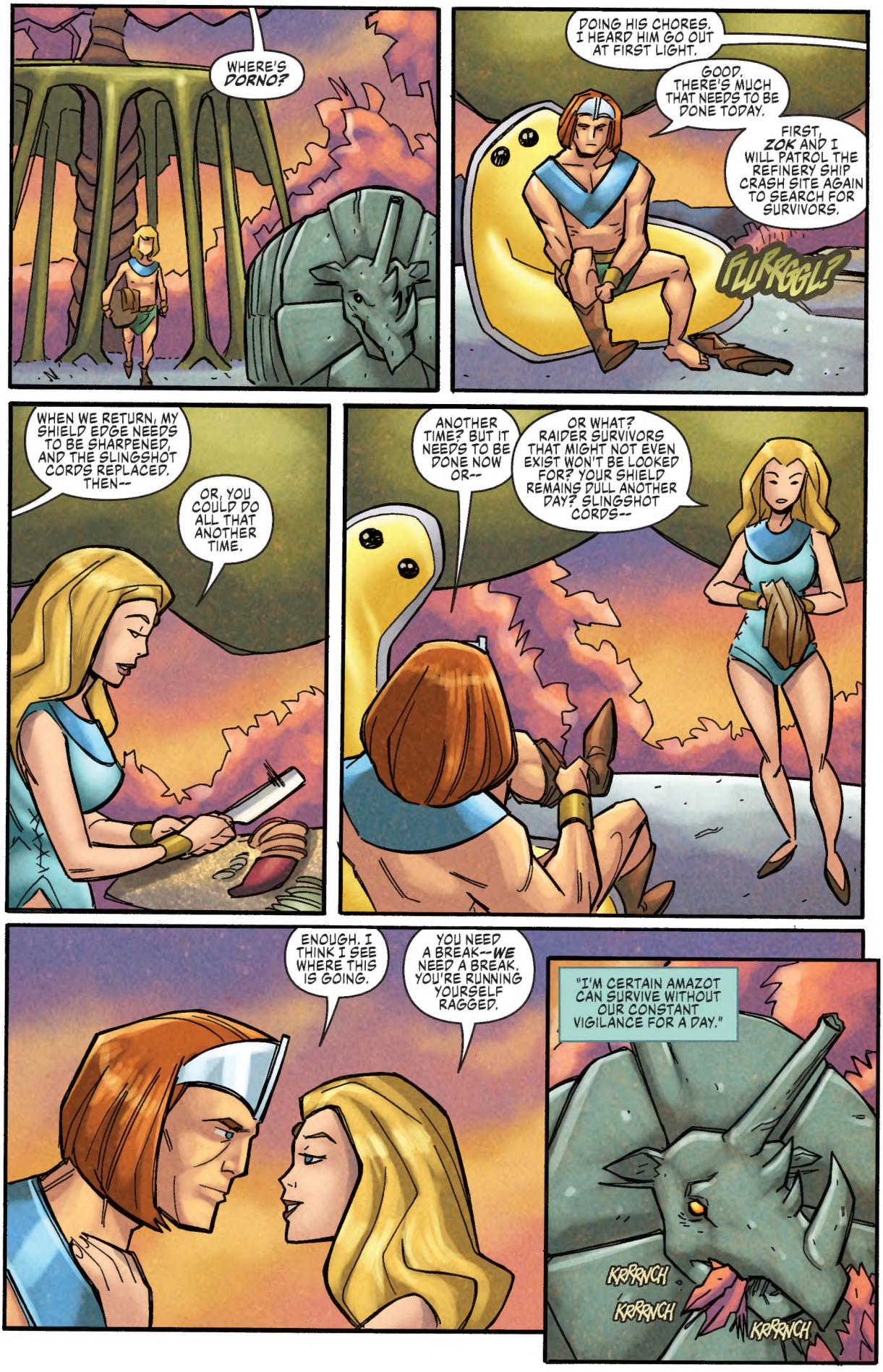
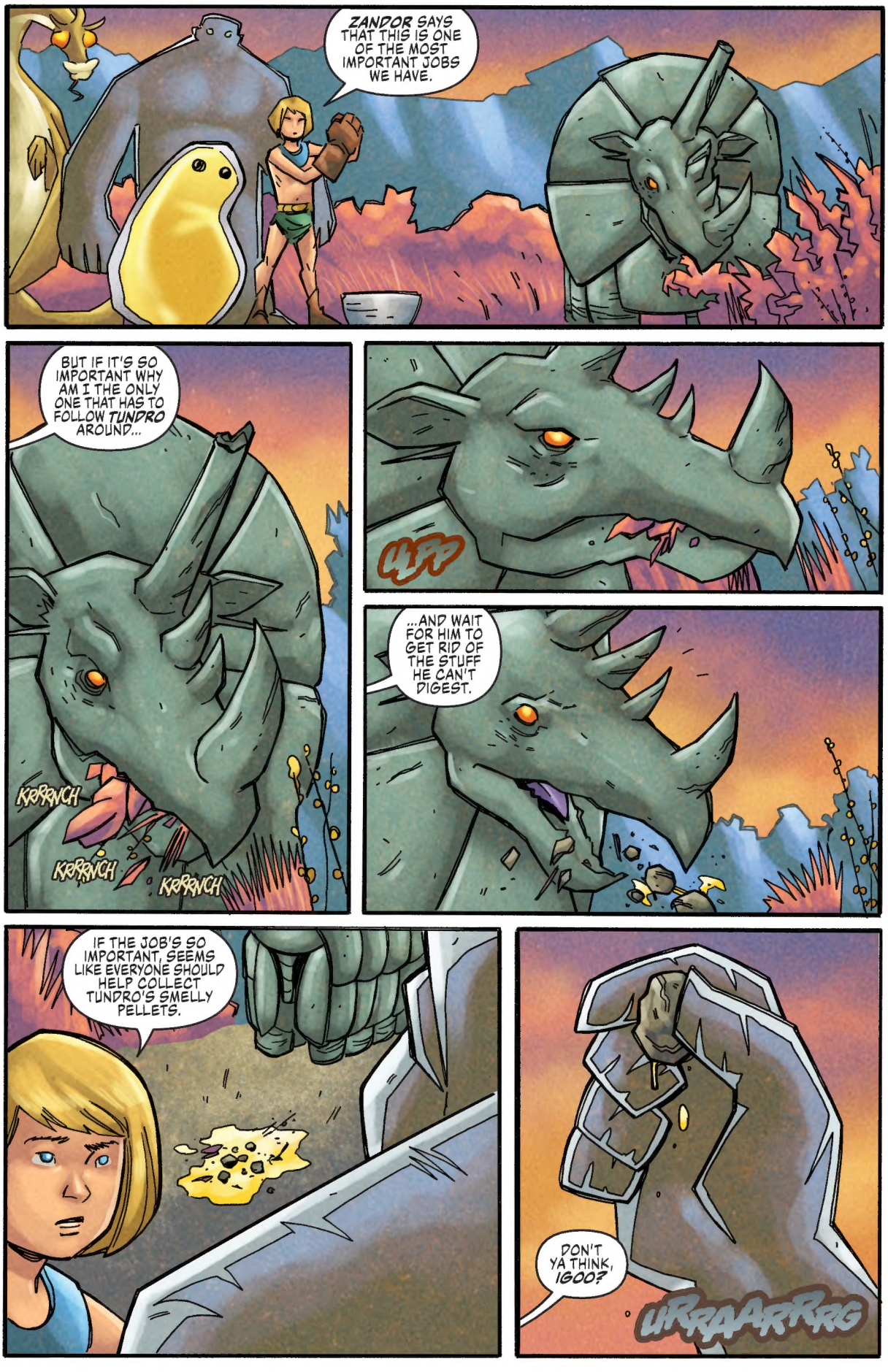
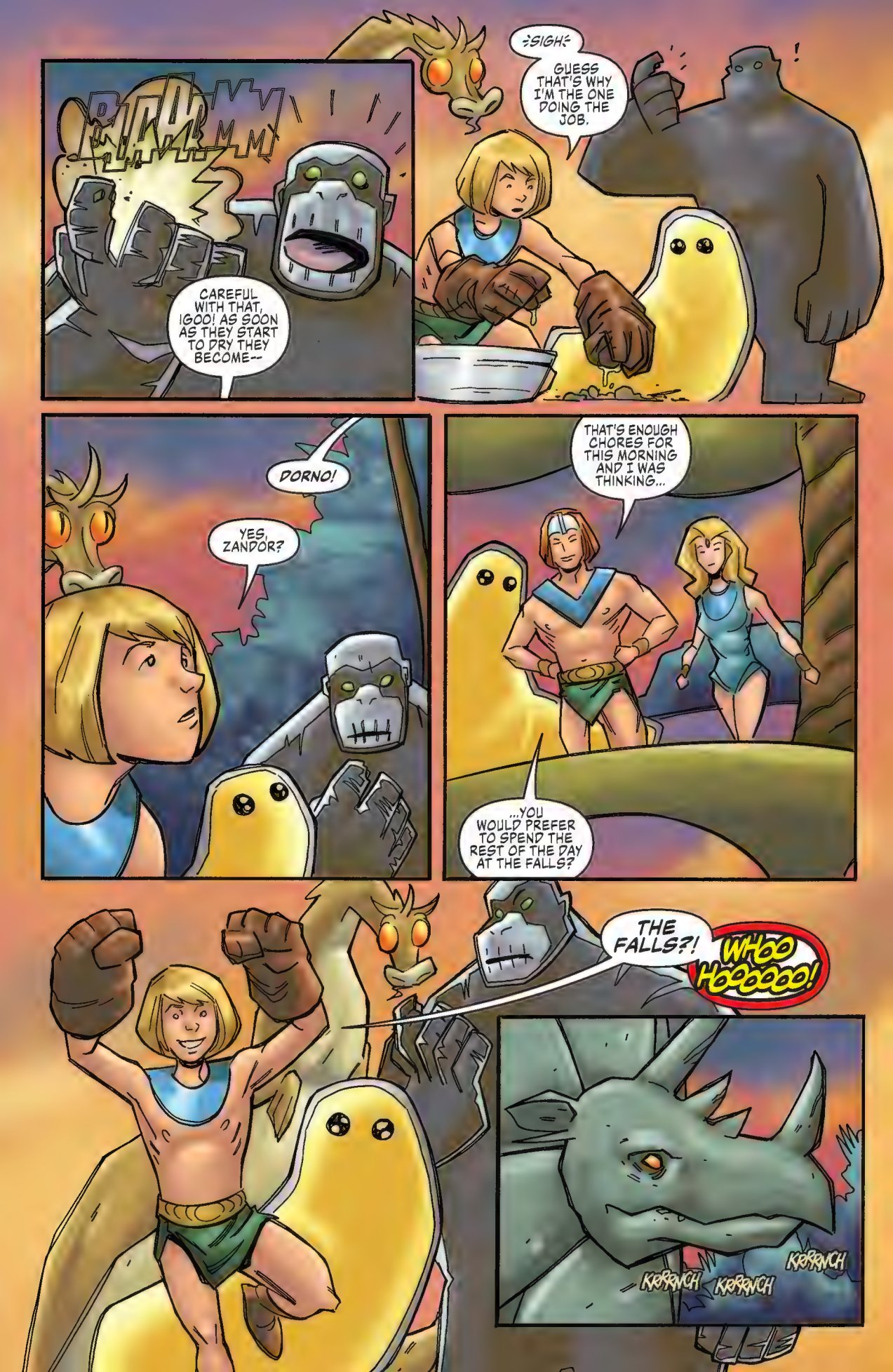

AMZOT.
THE THING BENEATH THE PLANET HAD BEEN SLEEPING...
...BUT NOW IT WAS AWAKE.
IT DID NOT KNOW HOW LONG IT HAD SLUMBERED, BUT HAD AWAKENED KNOWING THAT IT HAD A PURPOSE...
...AND EVEN THOUGH ITS THOUGHTS ARE MUDDLED, IT TRIES TO REMEMBER SPECIFICS.
DIRECTIVES BUBBLE TO THE SURFACE.
IT HAD BEEN CREATED FOR AND SENT ON A MISSION OF GRAVE IMPORTANCE.
THE PRESERVATION OF A GALACTIC EMPIRE WAS ITS OBJECTIVE.


THE ANCIENTS CALLED IT THE ENCEPHALON; THE EXPANSIVE KNOWLEDGE OF A GALACTIC DOMINION HOUSED IN A PHYSICAL FORM.
THIS WOULD BE HOW THE ANCIENTS WOULD SURVIVE THE VORACIOUS DARKNESS THAT WAS CONSUMING THE UNIVERSE.
COLLECTING ALL THAT THEY WERE, THE ANCIENTS SENT THE ENCEPHALON AND ITS ARK-SHIP OUT INTO THE DARKNESS OF SPACE IN SEARCH OF WHERE IT ALL HAD BEGUN.
THE BIRTHWORLD CALLED AMZOT.
PURSUED ACROSS THE GALAXY FOR COUNTLESS MILLENNIA, THE ARK-SHIP SUFFERED EXTENSIVE DAMAGE BEFORE CRASHING DOWN UPON ITS SACRED DESTINATION.
AND WHILE IT SLEPT, A PROCESS HAD BEGUN.
WHRRRRRRRRRRRRRR
NOW AWAKE, IT WOULD ASSESS THE DAMAGE, AND EXAMINE THE WORLD...
WHRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR
...TO CONTINUE ITS CRITICAL MISSION.

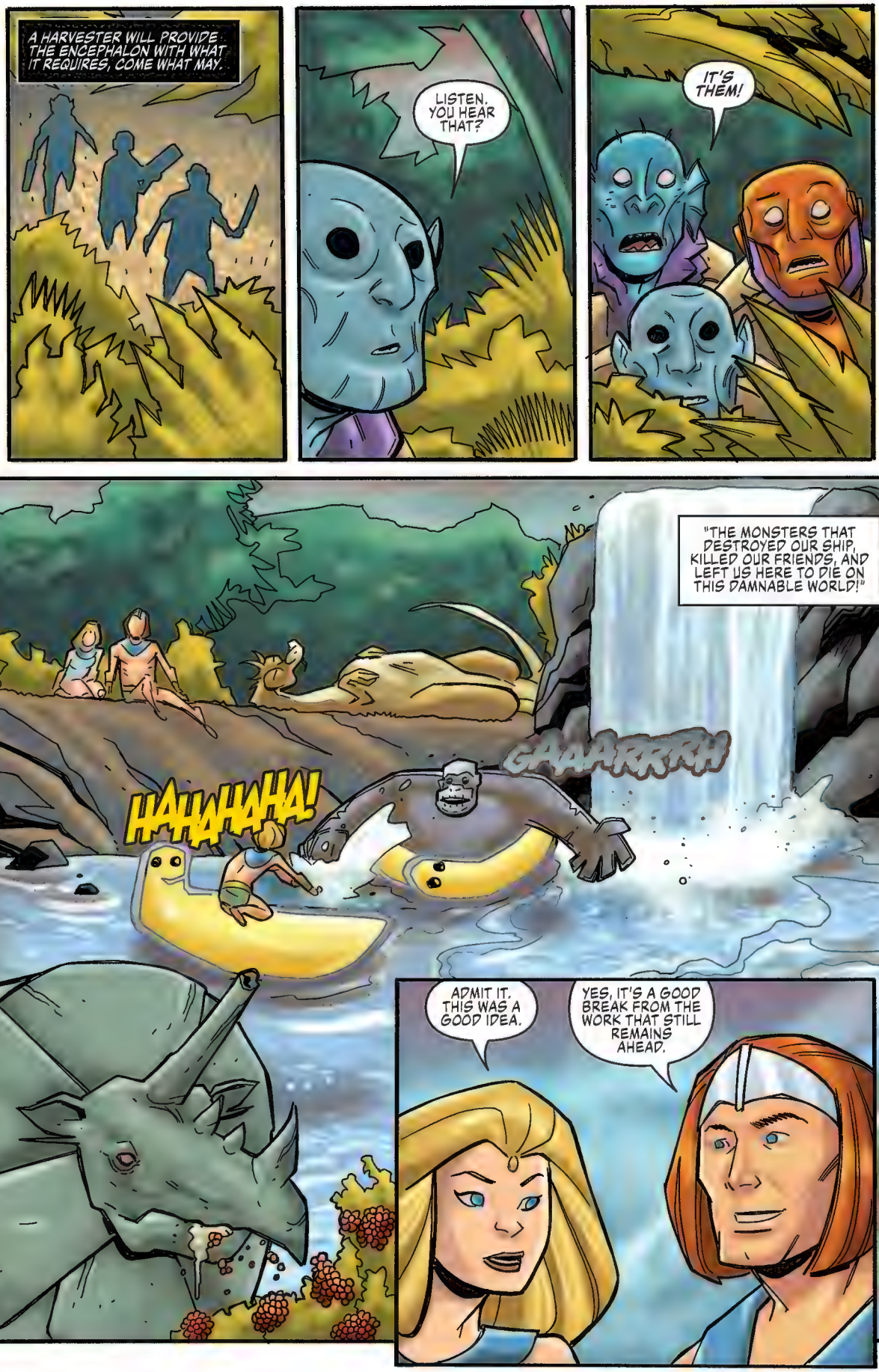
THE WORLD IT HAD FOUND ITSELF UPON HAD BEEN BARREN, LIFELESS, BUT NOW...
...IT TEEMED WITH LIFE.
YOU KNOW WE'RE GOING TO DIE HERE, DON'T YOU?
SHUT UP...WHY CAN'T YOU JUST SHUT UP?!
BOTH OF YOU NEED TO GET A HOLD OF YOURSELVES. WE JUST NEED TO CONTINUE TO SURVIVE UNTIL A RESCUE SHIP ARRIVES.
RESCUE SHIP? THERE WILL BE NO RESCUE SHIP! NOBODY KNOWS WHERE WE ARE OR HOW...
QUIET, THE BOTH OF YOU!
DO YOU HEAR THAT?
"SOMETHING TO EAT!"
FZZZZZZZZZAPP
GOOD SHOT, FOOL! THERE'S NOTHING LEFT OF IT!
HAVE I MENTIONED WE'RE ALL LIKELY TO DIE HERE?


WHERE'S DORNO?
DOING HIS CHORES, I HEARD HIM GO OUT AT FIRST LIGHT.
GOOD. THERE'S MUCH THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TODAY.
FIRST, ZOK AND I WILL PATROL THE REFINERY SHIP CRASH SITE AGAIN TO SEARCH FOR SURVIVORS.
FLLRRGGL?
WHEN WE RETURN, MY SHIELD EDGE NEEDS TO BE SHARPENED, AND THE SLINGSHOT CORDS REPLACED. THEN--
OR, YOU COULD DO ALL THAT ANOTHER TIME.
ANOTHER TIME? BUT IT NEEDS TO BE DONE NOW OR--
OR WHAT? RAIDER SURVIVORS THAT MIGHT NOT EVEN EXIST WON'T BE LOOKED FOR? YOUR SHIELD REMAINS DULL ANOTHER DAY? SLINGSHOT CORDS--
ENOUGH. I THINK I SEE WHERE THIS IS GOING.
YOU NEED A BREAK--WE NEED A BREAK. YOU'RE RUNNING YOURSELF RAGGED.
"I'M CERTAIN AMAZOT CAN SURVIVE WITHOUT OUR CONSTANT VIGILANCE FOR A DAY."
KRRRNCH
KRRRNCH
KRRRNCH


ZANDOR SAYS THAT THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT JOBS WE HAVE.
BUT IF IT'S SO IMPORTANT WHY AM I THE ONLY ONE THAT HAS TO FOLLOW TUNDRO AROUND...
KRRRNCH
KRRRNCH
KRRRNCH
URP
...AND WAIT FOR HIM TO GET RID OF THE STUFF HE CAN'T DIGEST.
IF THE JOB'S SO IMPORTANT, SEEMS LIKE EVERYONE SHOULD HELP COLLECT TUNDRO'S SMELLY PELLETS.
DON'T YA THINK, IGOO?
URRAARRRG


BLAAMM
CAREFUL WITH THAT, IGOO! AS SOON AS THEY START TO DRY THEY BECOME--
SIGH
GUESS THAT'S WHY I'M THE ONE DOING THE JOB.
DORNO!
YES, ZANDOR?
THAT'S ENOUGH CHORES FOR THIS MORNING AND I WAS THINKING...
...YOU WOULD PREFER TO SPEND THE REST OF THE DAY AT THE FALLS?
THE FALLS?!
WHOO HOOOOOO!
KRRRNCH
KRRRNCH
KRRRNCH

THE WORLD OUTSIDE HAS PROVEN ITSELF HOSTILE, BUT THE COLLECTION OF DATA MUST CONTINUE.
THE ENCEPHALON MUST KNOW ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT THE REBORN AMZOT, AND THE LIFE THAT NOW THRIVES UPON IT.
A MORE COMPLEX AND...DURABLE MEANS OF OBTAINING THIS CRUCIAL INFORMATION MUST BE CREATED.
A HARVESTER WILL COLLECT ALL BIOLOGICAL DATA.


A HARVESTER WILL PROVIDE THE ENCEPHALON WITH WHAT IT REQUIRES, COME WHAT MAY.
LISTEN. YOU HEAR THAT?
IT'S THEM!
"THE MONSTERS THAT DESTROYED OUR SHIP, KILLED OUR FRIENDS, AND LEFT US HERE TO DIE ON THIS DAMNABLE WORLD!"
GAAARRRRH
HAHAHAHA!
ADMIT IT. THIS WAS A GOOD IDEA.
YES, IT'S A GOOD BREAK FROM THE WORK THAT STILL REMAINS AHEAD.

"A SIMPLE YES WOULD HAVE SUFFICED."
IF I'M GOING TO DIE HERE, THAN I'M TAKING AS MANY OF THEM WITH ME BEFORE I GO.
HIGHER FUNCTIONING LIFE FORMS DETECTED.
WHAT IS THAT?
SPECIMENS DO NOT APPEAR INDIGENOUS TO PRESENT ENVIRONMENT.
PROCEEDING WITH NEXT PHASE OF INVESTIGATION.
SOMETHING I INTEND TO KILL BEFORE IT CAN KILL ME!
BRAAMMPH
BRAAMMPH
FZZZZZZZZZPPP
ZZZKKK
LIFE FORMS RESPONSE HOSTILE. ENERGY WEAPONS UTILIZED. ASSIMILATING.
FZZZZZZZZZPPP
BRAAMMPH
ZZZKKK

FZZZZZZZZZZAPPP
BRAAMMPH
ZZZKKK
FZZZZZZZZZZAPPP
BRAAMMPH
ZZZKKK
ENERGY WEAPONS ASSIMILATED. INITIATING DEFENSE MODE.
FZZZZZZZZZZAAPPH
YEEEEEAAARRRH!
ARRRRRRRRRRGGGH!
HURRRK!
GENETIC ANALYSIS INITIATED.
GENETIC MATRIX COPYING.
ARRUGGH!

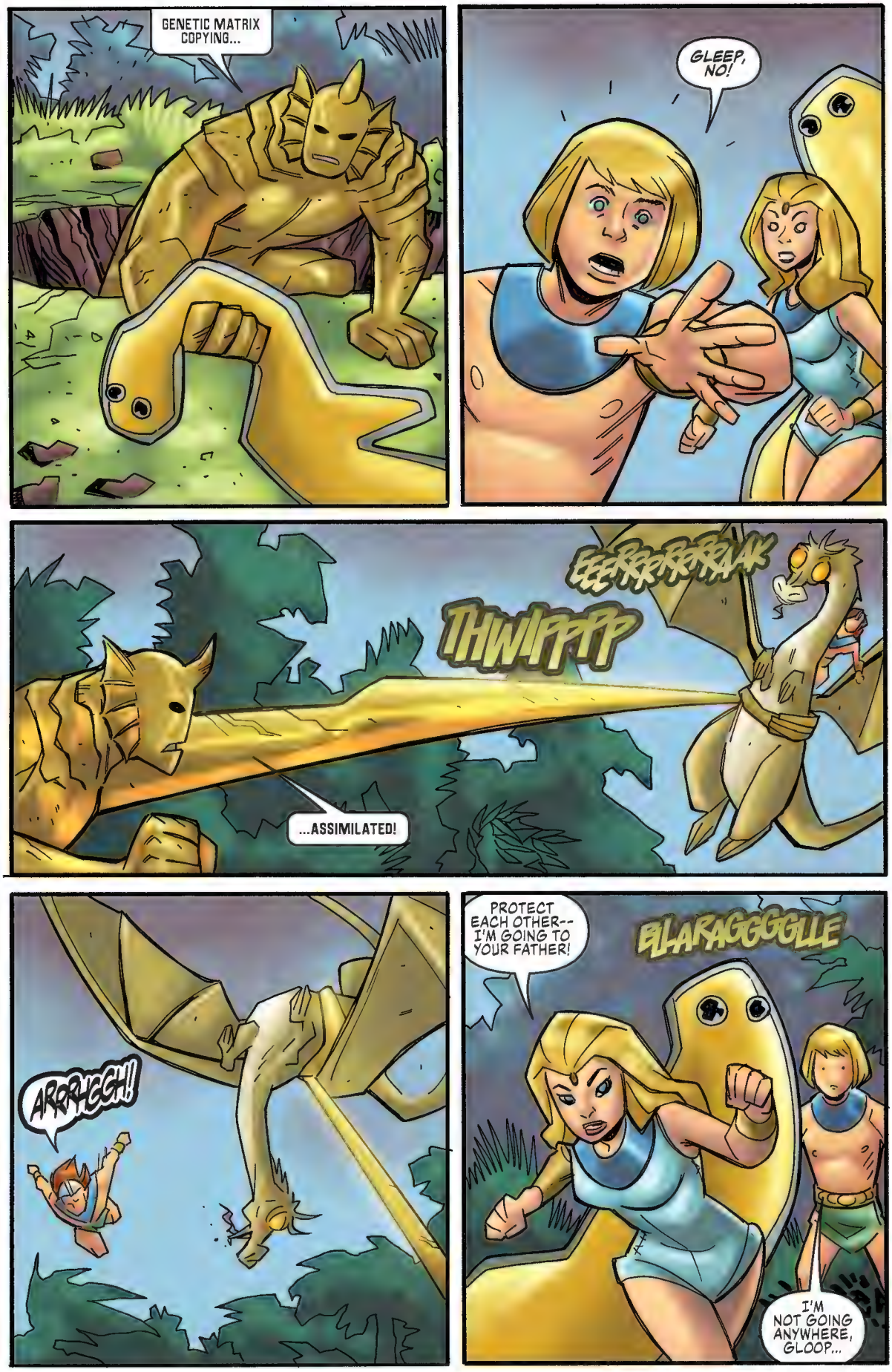
GENETIC MATRIX ASSIMILATED.
ZZZKKK
ZZZKKK
ZZZKKK
DATA HARVESTED.
PROCEEDING WITH FINAL SUBJECT. DEFENSE MODE SUSTAINED.
SLSSSSSSSSSSSSHH
AIIIEEEEEEEE--
CHOKK
SUBJECT NEUTRALIZED.

GENETIC ANALYSIS...
CAREFUL NOW, WE'RE NOT SURE WHAT WE'RE DEALING WITH!
HRRRAAGH
NEW LIFE FORMS PRESENTED. BEGIN GENETIC ANALYSIS.
POOT
POOT
POOT
POOT
WEAPON, BIOLOGICAL IN NATURE, UTILIZED.
THOOMPH
BOOOMPH
THOOOMPH

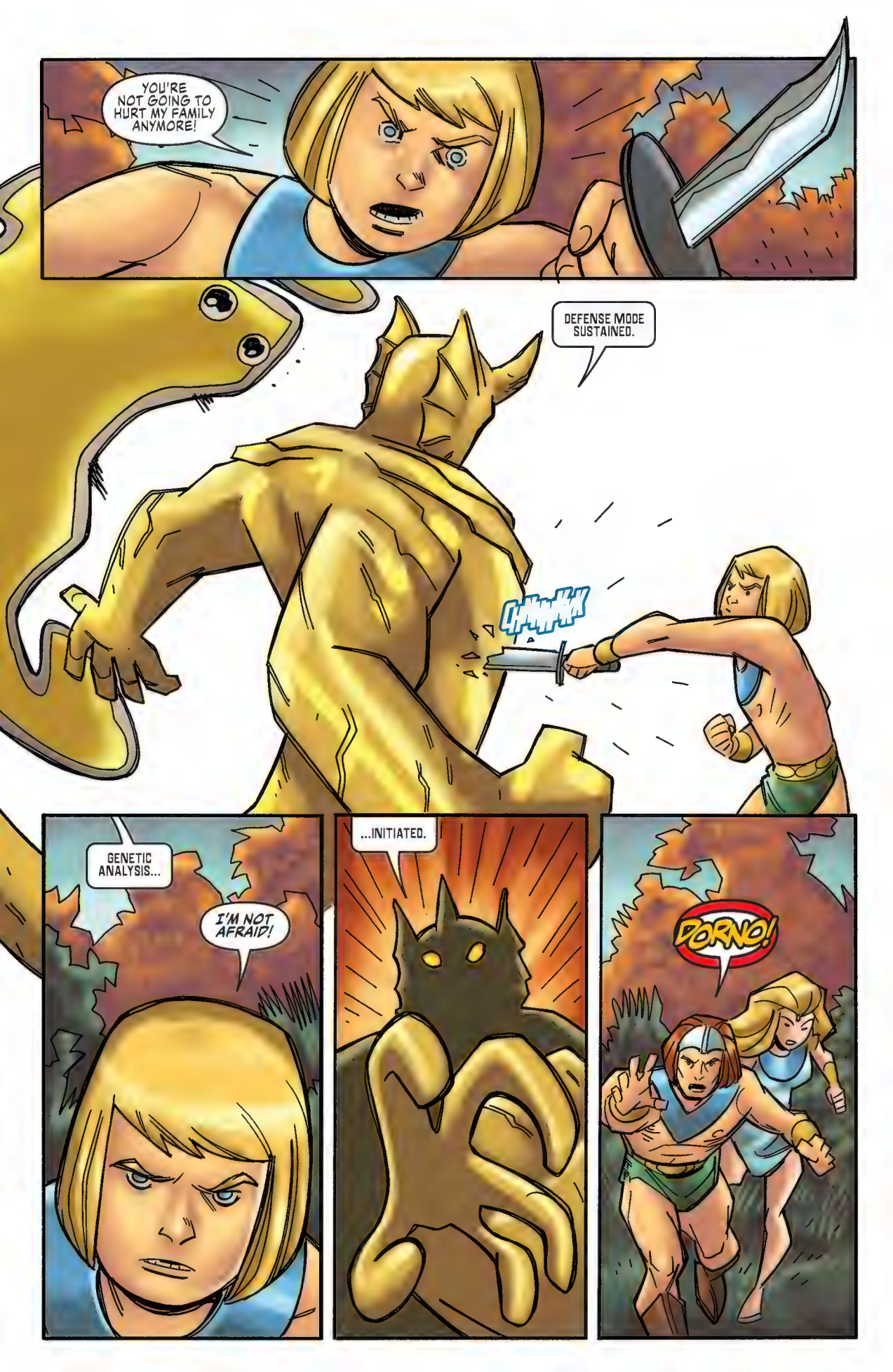
KRRRR-TURRSSHHH
BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS ASSIMILATED. INITIATING DEFENSE MODE.
RAAARGGH
GENETIC ANALYSIS INITIATED.
GENETIC MATRIX COPYING.
HRRRURR
SLAAAAMM

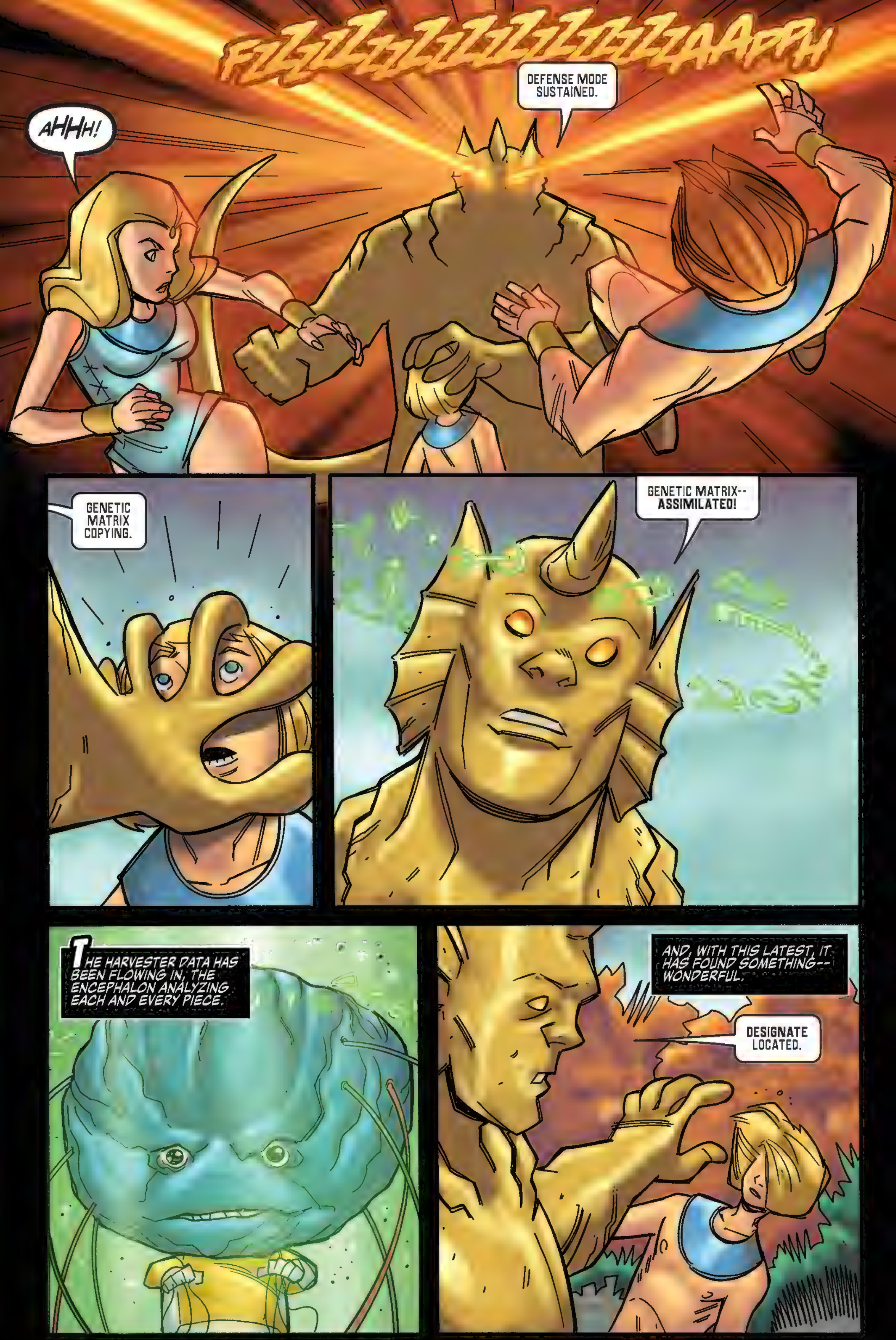
URRRAAAAAAAAGGH
DEFENSE MODE SUSTAINED.
ROOOT
ROOOT
ROOOT
THOOOOOOOM
THOOOOOOOM
BOOOOOOOM
BIOLOGICAL SUBJECT NEUTRALIZED. GENETIC MATRIX COPYING.
GENETIC MATRIX ASSIMILATED.

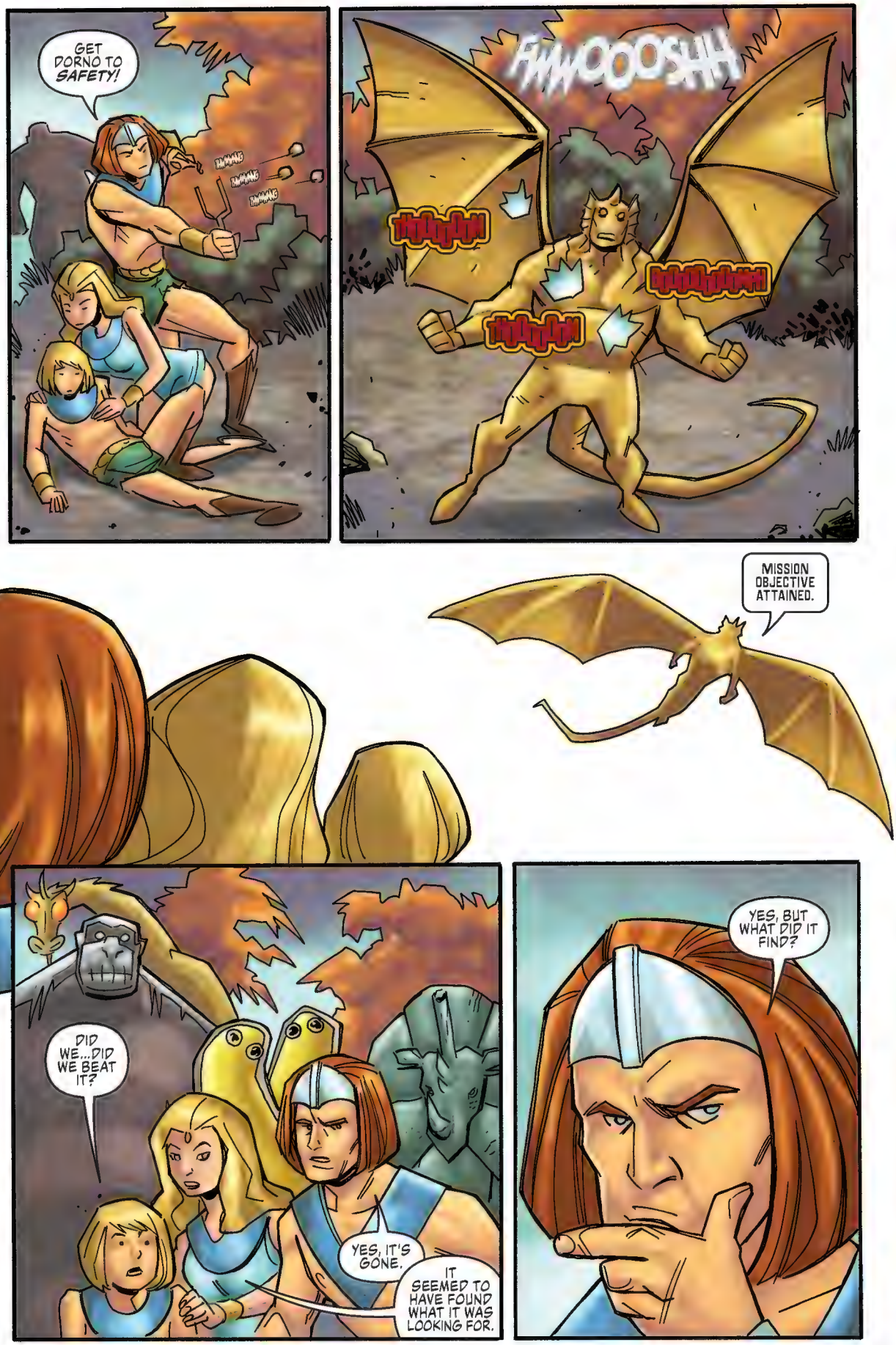
THAT THING HAS TAKEN ON THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TUNDRO AND IGOO!
FAAAZZZZZZZMMM
LET'S KEEP IT FROM HAVING ANY CONTACT WITH THE OTHERS!
FAAAZZZZZZZMMM
WHAT IS THAT THING? I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT!
BLLLRGGLL
THAT'S WHAT WE INTEND TO FIND OUT.
FLAAAGGGLLE
NOT TOO CLOSE, GLEEP!

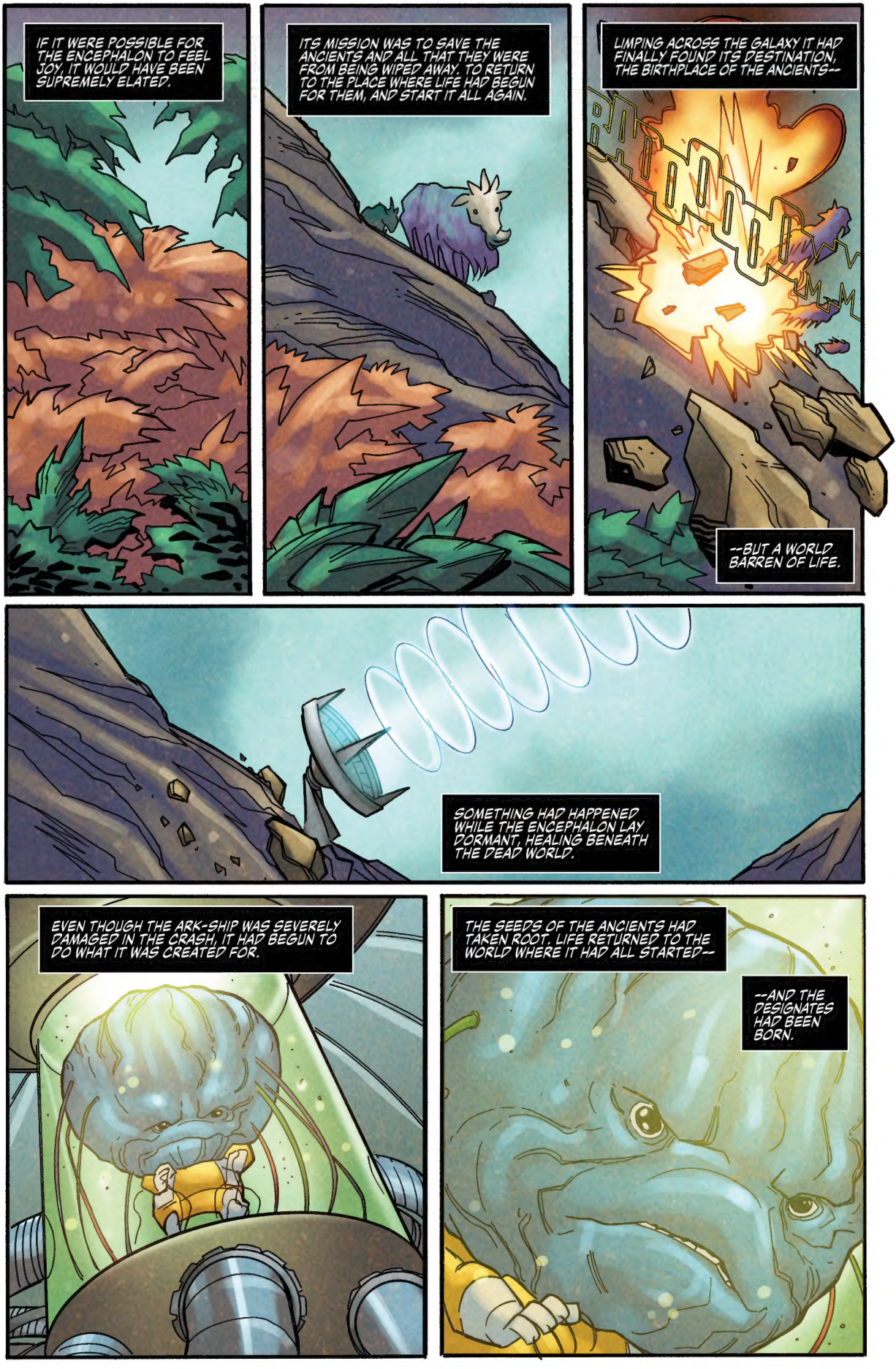

GENETIC MATRIX COPYING...
GLEEP, NO!
EEERRRRRRRAK
THWIPPPP
...ASSIMILATED!
ARRRGGH!
PROTECT EACH OTHER-- I'M GOING TO YOUR FATHER!
BLARAGGGGLLE
I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE, GLOOP...

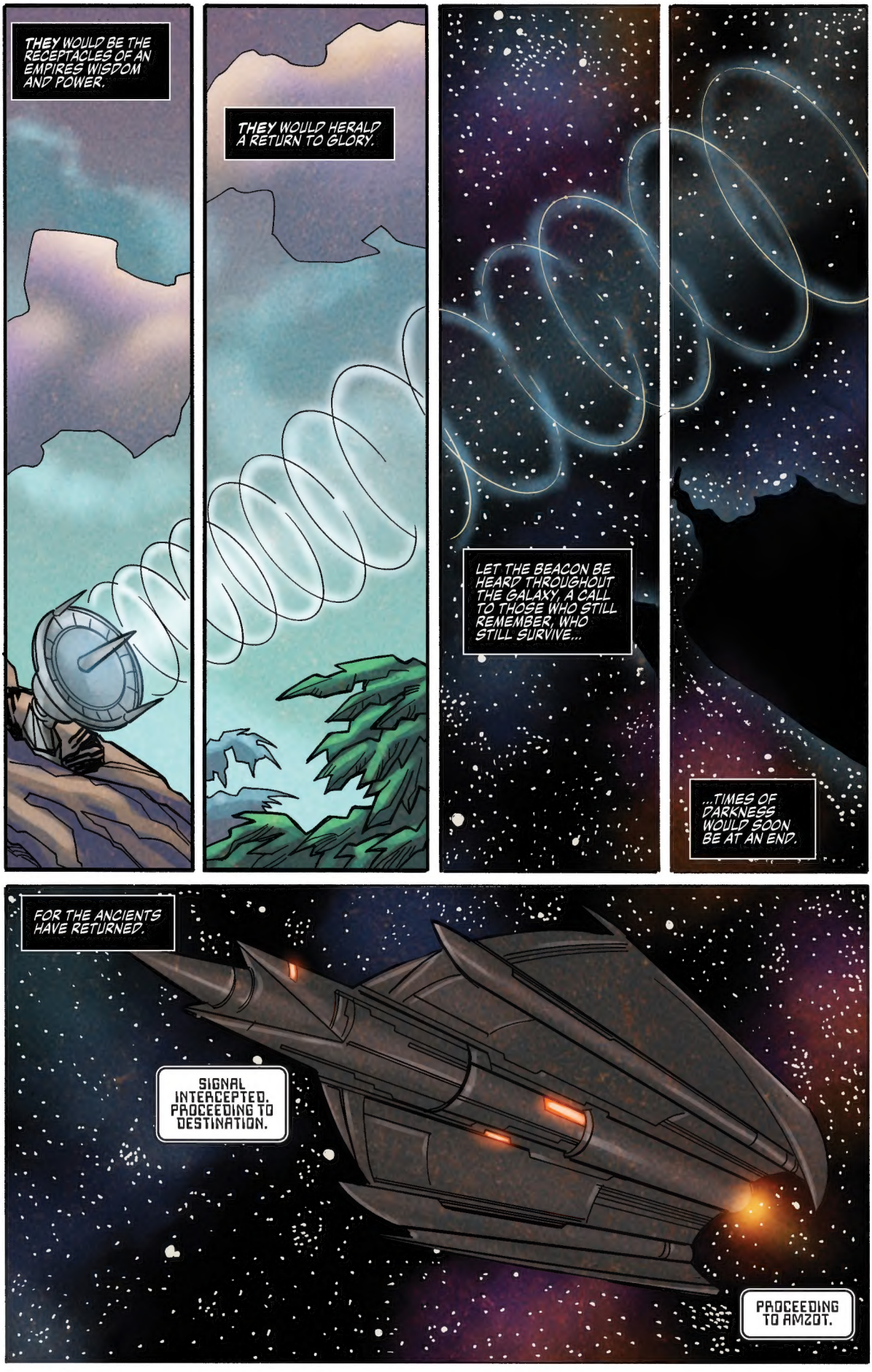
"...WE'LL FACE THIS THING TOGETHER!"
SUBJECTS HARVESTED-- PROCEEDING WITH FURTHER GENETIC ANALYSIS.
ZANDOR?
I'M FINE. WE NEED TO GET BACK TO DORNO AND GLOOP!
LET GO, GLOOP! THIS THING DOESN'T LOOK SO TOUGH!
FLARRRGGGLE
GLOOORRPLEGAHHH
GENETIC ANALYSIS INITIATED!


YOU'RE NOT GOING TO HURT MY FAMILY ANYMORE!
DEFENSE MODE SUSTAINED.
CHUNK
GENETIC ANALYSIS...
I'M NOT AFRAID!
...INITIATED.
DORNO!


FZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZAAPPH
AHHH!
DEFENSE MODE SUSTAINED.
GENETIC MATRIX COPYING.
GENETIC MATRIX-- ASSIMILATED!
THE HARVESTER DATA HAS BEEN FLOWING IN, THE ENCEPHALON ANALYZING EACH AND EVERY PIECE.
AND, WITH THIS LATEST, IT HAS FOUND SOMETHING-- WONDERFUL.
DESIGNATE LOCATED.


GET DORNO TO SAFETY!
FWOOOSHH
MISSION OBJECTIVE ATTAINED.
DID WE...DID WE BEAT IT?
YES, IT'S GONE.
IT SEEMED TO HAVE FOUND WHAT IT WAS LOOKING FOR.
YES, BUT WHAT DID IT FIND?


IF IT WERE POSSIBLE FOR THE ENCEPHALON TO FEEL JOY, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN SUPREMELY ELATED.
ITS MISSION WAS TO SAVE THE ANCIENTS AND ALL THAT THEY WERE FROM BEING WIPED AWAY. TO RETURN TO THE PLACE WHERE LIFE HAD BEGUN FOR THEM, AND START IT ALL AGAIN.
LIMPING ACROSS THE GALAXY IT HAD FINALLY FOUND ITS DESTINATION, THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE ANCIENTS--
--BUT A WORLD BARREN OF LIFE.
SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED WHILE THE ENCEPHALON LAY DORMANT, HEALING BENEATH THE DEAD WORLD.
EVEN THOUGH THE ARK-SHIP WAS SEVERELY DAMAGED IN THE CRASH, IT HAD BEGUN TO DO WHAT IT WAS CREATED FOR.
THE SEEDS OF THE ANCIENTS HAD TAKEN ROOT. LIFE RETURNED TO THE WORLD WHERE IT HAD ALL STARTED--
--AND THE DESIGNATES HAD BEEN BORN.


THEY WOULD BE THE RECEPTACLES OF AN EMPIRES WISDOM AND POWER.
THEY WOULD HERALD A RETURN TO GLORY.
LET THE BEACON BE HEARD THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY, A CALL TO THOSE WHO STILL REMEMBER, WHO STILL SURVIVE...
...TIMES OF DARKNESS WOULD SOON BE AT AN END.
FOR THE ANCIENTS HAVE RETURNED.
SIGNAL INTERCEPTED. PROCEEDING TO DESTINATION.
PROCEEDING TO AMZOT.

TWO SUPERSTAR CREATORS TAKE ON TWO SUPERSTAR CHARACTERS!

Jimmy and Amanda, Dynamite fans are going to be thrilled to see you writing another book following your epic *Invincible Red Sonja* (available now in a beautiful single-volume hardcover!). And you're returning for one of the most exciting crossover projects we've ever been involved with.

Let's start with Elvira: What history do you have with her shows, movies, and character (created and portrayed by the wondrous Cassandra Peterson)?

JIMMY: I first discovered Elvira many years ago; my buddy Joey Delfini had a poster of her on the wall, and he explained who she was and then we watched her movie and I was hooked on her look and great sense of humor. Since then she has become an icon, and as I read more about who Cassandra really is as a person, I became a bigger fan of her and her story and her perspective on the world around her.

AMANDA: What I remember about first discovering Elvira is wanting to be like her. She's got that sense of humor, that love of horror and comedy, and that hair and boobs and gorgeousness, all dialed up to eleven. I think she was (and still is) a great role model for all us weird girls.

I was lucky enough to be on a panel with Cassandra at San Diego Comic-Con *yeeeeaaarrs* ago, and she was such a smart, kind, and funny person. If I remember correctly, she may have mentioned something about giving up the Elvira mantle (NOOOOO!!!), but I am so glad she chose to keep being her!

Turning to our other key cast member: Harley Quinn is one of the characters in comics on whom you both left an indelible impact across a tenure of multiple years and countless contributions. You've reunited with her a few times after the conclusion of your core run, but what is it like to pick her back up again?

JIMMY: I think everyone got the wrong idea about why we stopped writing the Harley books. We eventually were writing the equivalent of three issues a month for many years, and we needed a break and time to have a life. It wasn't that we never wanted to write her again, we just needed an overall mental break from the amount of work we were doing. Since then, every offer we have had to write Harley — and those have been few and far between — we have taken.

We see Harley's story as ongoing and write her in her own continuity; this includes her supporting cast and where she lives and so on. When we were offered this crossover with Elvira, it was the easiest thing in the world to make it work for us. Diehard fans of our work will feel like we never left Harley, while at the same time we can take her on a new adventure with her new friend Elvira. This series is so much fun.

AMANDA: What Jimmy said. We began the *Harley Quinn* series as a monthly title, and we were told that it might not do so well and could end by issue six. Nobody realized that the series would take off the way it did, and when a comic becomes that beloved, the powers that be understandably want more of it. We tried to accommodate that, but towards the end of our run we were on two issues per month, plus specials... I was running on three hours of sleep a night, and Jimmy was grumpy. That said, we LOVE working with that character, and whenever we get an opportunity to do that, we grab it.

She is one of my favorite characters to work with, because I love a story and character with humor (even if it is dark humor). I've worked with characters who are dark, or who are angst-ridden, and I've found that the characters who fit me best are the ones with lots of humor, and lots of human foibles. That might explain my relationship with Jimmy.

In many ways, though perhaps not initially obvious, these two wisecracking women have some personality and attitudes in common (though they also certainly have their differences). How do the two of you see their dynamics, and how does that come through when you're writing their joint adventures?

JIMMY: Their goals are different, but how they reach them is the fun part. They each have a very instinctive way of creating chaos for those around them and themselves. They have two very distinctive voices, and it's so much fun watching them process each other.

AMANDA: It is so much fun putting these two characters together. We're almost approaching it as a buddy flick. It's much easier to write and draw Harley, because we've been doing that for so many years. Even though we have loved the Elvira character for years, we are not as familiar with writing her, and are still getting a feel for how to approach her. Cassandra has been majorly helpful with that, and we are definitely getting a better feel for writing Elvira. Nobody knows Elvira like Cassandra does!

We're hearing the central story for the series is a big, riotous Halloween party like no other. From either side of the equation, can fans expect any surprise guests to show up?

JIMMY: We are very loyal to Harley's established supporting cast and friends, and we will be dropping them in and out of the series in a way that makes sense to the story and characters. You can expect some super-people and other regulars along the way, but in the end it's up to the two main characters to deliver the goods. Why Harley worked so well during our run was about keeping the focus on her and her world, and with Elvira in the mix, we will continue that and bring Elvira's world into it as the series goes on.

AMANDA: Yeah, a giant Halloween bash seemed like a really excellent way to introduce Elvira into the world of Harley. And nothing Harley does is ever small and restrained, so it made sense for her to laser-focus on Elvira to make the Halloween party the most fantabulous event of the year. And yes, we'll definitely be seeing some characters who we love working with, because that's what we do!

NEXT ISSUE:

SPOTLIGHT ON IGOO!

As a fighting force, the Herculoids are second to none in their strength and dedication to defending their home. But as individuals, each one has a uniquely fascinating tale to tell of how they came to become one of Planet Amzot's legendary champions. In this issue: Discover the story behind one of the team's most loyal and powerful members - Igoo, the Rock Ape! Dedicated documentarians TOM SNIEGOSKI and CRAIG ROUSSEAU unveil a new chapter in Amzot's bestiary with The Herculoids #6 - expertly embellished by captivating covers from FRANCESCO MATTINA, JOSEPH MICHAEL LINSNER, BJORN BARENDS, and KYLE HOTZ!

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